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City Council & Neighborhood District Association Chairs  
Joint Work Session, May 31  
Narrowing Busway and Light Rail Alignment Alternatives

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Those Seated at the Table:

Milwaukie City Council

James Bernard, Mayor  
Mary King  
Larry Lancaster  
Brian Newman

Neighborhood Associations

Peter Koonce, Ardenwald Chair  
Dolly Macken-Hambright, Linwood Chair  
Arthur Ball, Lewelling Chair  
Kathy Buss, Island Station Secretary  
Ed Zumwalt, Historic Milwaukie Chair  
David Aschenbrenner, Hector Campbell Chair  
Teresa Bresaw, Lake Road Chair

Tri Met

Neil McFarlane

Facilitator

Jeanne Lawson

Metro

David Bragdon, Councilor

Clackamas County

Larry Sowa, Clackamas County Commissioner  
Mike Jordan, Clackamas County Commissioner

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Jeanne Lawson, the meeting's facilitator, asked everyone in the room to introduce themselves (Approx. 45 people in total attendance) and laid out the ground rules that would govern the meeting.

She stated that the purpose of the Joint Work Session among Milwaukie City Councilors, Neighborhood Association Leaders, and Agency Officials (City Staff, Metro, Tri-Met, Clackamas County) was to narrow down the set of Light Rail and Busway options and select the ones the community could support as part of the next phase of the South Corridor Study.

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Michelle Gregory, Milwaukie Neighborhood Services Manager, discussed the history of past Light Rail campaigns in the City of Milwaukie, the history of the South Corridor Transportation Study, and described the public involvement efforts that have been implemented in the past. She then outlined the outreach strategies that might be employed in the future.

To provide a context to measure and consider the options to be presented, Gregory discussed the different sets of criteria that have been developed throughout the process (by the Metro Technical & Policy Group, the South Corridor Working Group and the Goals of Milwaukie's Downtown & Riverfront Planning Process). She also handed out the "14 Points" the Neighborhoods outlined in March.

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Lawson asked those seated at the table to review the criteria and identify points that should be emphasized, discarded, or modified.

- The group agreed that none of the criteria should be removed.
- David Aschenbrenner wanted to highlight the point that Light Rail and Busway alignments must not run through Milwaukie's Neighborhoods. It was clarified that residential Neighborhoods should not be impacted.
- Aschenbrenner emphasized the point that "social engineering" or planned growth should not be mandated near the rail lines or bus lines. It was clarified that such growth should not be mandated by outside agencies.
- Councilor Mary King wanted to make sure any traffic a new transportation system introduces is accounted for and mitigated.
- Peter Koonce wanted to limit the amount of pass-through traffic that might be created as a result of a northern or southern Park and Ride facility. He stated that the group needed to discuss some "givens" such as the Tacoma Park & Ride.
- Ed Zumwalt said it's important to be sensitive of parking if a transit station is created at the Milwaukie Jr. High Site.
- Aschenbrenner said the Jr. High Site is a crucial component to any Light Rail scenario because its inclusion preserves the site and is important in redeveloping the City's Downtown.
  - Koonce said the inclusion of the Jr. High site and its grounds allows for the preservation of both a valued historical asset and downtown open space.
- Koonce said he wants the transportation system to accommodate both regional transfers and local access, which might mean creating multiple transit stations.
- Dolly Macken-Hambright said that stopping schedules, not necessarily the number of transit centers, dictates how quick and efficient the system will be.

- Macken-Hambright went on to say she doesn't want the Downtown to take the brunt of regional traffic and doesn't want the City to be divided any further by transportation throughways.
  - Koonce said it's important not to sacrifice transportation efficiency for the sake of protecting the Downtown. Transportation efficiency and the goals of the Downtown Redevelopment Plan should be waited together.
  - Teresa Bresaw stated that only quality development should be introduced in the Downtown.
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Michael Fisher of Tri-Met discussed the eight different Light Rail alignments that were on display.

Fisher presented the options in the order the alternatives have been developed, and emphasized the conceptual nature of the drawings and the fact they in no way represented fixed designs.

#### **Alternative A-1, Main Street Terminus; In all of the "A" options the rail follows Main Street.**

Fisher pointed out the Park and Ride facility at Tacoma Street and stated that all eight of the Light Rail plans feature a 1,000 space facility at this location.

The factors differentiating the different alternatives are where the transit centers are located, what the alignment might be and if there's additional Park and Ride facilities placed elsewhere in order to provide more space and to alleviate parking pressure in Downtown Milwaukie.

In the A-1 alignment, the terminus is at the Safeway site. Fisher said that of all the rail alternatives, this is the lowest costing option. He reminded the group that presenting a low cost option was part of the initial direction from the policy group.

- This alignment reduces the Main Street parking supply, which is not consistent with the Downtown and Riverfront Plan.

#### **Alternative A-2, Safeway Transit Center Terminus**

The line swings off of Main Street and into just north of the Safeway site, thereby preserving some of Main Street's parking.

- This option requires the acquisition of five businesses in order to get the line off of Main Street.
- This option also introduces a three level, 600 space Park and Ride facility in the Northern Industrial area.

Councilor Brain Newman clarified that all of the A options call for ramps for busses on Highway 224 from Main Street in order to keep the busses off of Harrison Street and other Downtown streets.

#### **Alternative A-3, McLoughlin Transit Center Terminus**

Moves the Bus Transit Center and the Light Rail Station into a triangular area created by the six properties between Main Street, McLoughlin Boulevard and Scott.

- The Park and Ride in the Northern Industrial Area would be maintained from the A-2 option.
- This option requires the taking of six properties.

#### **Alternative A-4, Southgate Transit Center**

This option removes the Transit Center out of the Downtown and places the bus transfer station and Light Rail station at the Southgate site next to the Park and Ride facility laid out in A-2 and A-3.

- There would be a Light Rail station at the line's terminus in Downtown, on Main Street near McLoughlin Boulevard and Scott (no bus transfers).

#### **Alternative B-1, Jr. High Terminus; In the "B" options, the Light Rail line follows the Tillamook Branch of the Union Pacific Rail Road.**

A Light Rail line terminates at the Jr. High.

- The Light Rail line and the existing freight line would have to be realigned and reconstructed in order to work the proper configuration.
- Would require taking 1 acre of the Jr. High property, and most likely taking the annex building.
- There would be no impact to the historical building, or the Milwaukie Pool area.
- Busses would be aligned outside the Jr. High.
  - Koonce wondered if these busses could be funneled off Harrison Street by constructing a ramp off of Highway 224.
  - Aschenbrenner asked how many busses would be placed at the Jr. High site, and the answer was that there would be 13 bus bays constructed at the site.

- There was some question as to whether there was enough space for 13 bays, and it was determined that it was very tight, but there is enough room for that number of bays.
- Koonce wondered why the line wasn't double tracked into the site. The answer was that there isn't much cost savings to be had there; the cost savings come in not having to tear up Main Street.
- Koonce asked what the cost savings would be to double track Main Street. Those costs were not yet available.
- Art Ball asked if there was enough room to double track Main. The answer was that there is, but that it would eat up all of the parking on Main Street.
- Koonce felt that double tracking was crucial for future expansion.

### **Alternative B-2, Lake Road Terminus**

Create a second Light Rail station at 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Lake Road.

- This features two transit stations that serve the Downtown (Lake Road and Jr. High).
- Creates a Park and Ride garage at the site between Adams, Main, Washington, and McLoughlin.
  - The garage would be four levels, three stories tall, provide about 400 spaces, and would feature ground floor retail facing Main Street.
  - The garage would intercept northern traveling park and riders, and would feature easy access to McLoughlin.

### **Alternative B-3, Park Ave. Terminus**

Moves the Park and Ride garage out of southern Downtown, and creates a Park and Ride lot at Park Avenue.

- Koonce wondered if this Light Rail line would creep into people's private property. The answer is that the line follows existing public right of way.

### **Alternative AB-1, Southgate Crossover**

This is a hybrid option, the line follows Main Street, then veers north at the Southgate Park and Ride and Transit Center, links with the Tillamook Branch, and then terminates at the Milwaukie Jr. High.

Fisher reviewed a matrix defining the options' costs, travel times, business displacements, double track operation, added park and ride spaces, bus increases, loss of buildable land, and acres needed at the Milwaukie Jr. High site. Fisher highlighted the following:

- A-1 is the lowest costing option and stands as the baseline for the seven others.
  - The base cost is \$379 million in 2006 dollars.
  - This cost is less expensive than the Interstate Max, and is the same length.
- A-2 adds \$21 million, A-3 adds \$17 million, A-4 adds \$21 million; B-1 adds \$13 million, AB-1 adds \$39 million
- All "A" options are single track, all B options are double track the whole length, and AB is a hybrid.
- Zumwalt suggested that while it might be feasible to start with a single track, it might not be the wisest option because it will be much more expensive and disruptive to go back and lay another track in the future.

Buses on Harrison Street were then discussed.

- The A-4 and AB-1 options take the Transit Center out of Downtown, which might result in the reduction of buses on Harrison Street.
- With the Jr. High transit center scenario, forecasting for the year 2020, 12 more busses an hour would travel Harrison than the no-build option.
- There are no increases in the number of busses on Harrison in the "A" options because of the ramps that would be constructed off of Highway 224.

B-1 option offers the least lost buildable land.

Councilor King asked how the Jr. High alternatives would affect the site's surrounding environmental elements.

- Dave Unsworth of Metro explained the Draft Environment Impact Statement would address such issues, and that such issues are a priority.

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Unsworth explained the three Busway options that were on display.

- He explained that Busways provide reliable service because of their frequency, and because they have their own right of way. So while traffic may be congested, the Busway will be able to move more freely in its own lane.
- Unsworth focused on where the stations were located in the three different options.

- Each option provides for a Park and Ride structure at Tacoma and Main and bus ramps on Highway 224 in an attempt to keep regional busses off of Downtown streets.
- Unsworth explained that Transit Centers try to service the entire region, from the east and south of Milwaukie, so not all service funnels through Downtown Portland. A key component to all Transit Centers is that they are safe for pedestrians.

### **C-1 Safeway Transit Center**

Unsworth said this option was on the table because it's the project from which other project costs are devised.

- This option gets people Downtown in a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- He said he understands the consensus to get the transit center out of the Safeway site, and therefore developed alternate options.

### **C-2, McLoughlin Transit Center**

This moves the Transit Center to the property described in Light Rail options A-3, A-4, the triangular area between Main, McLoughlin and Scott.

- The problem with this option is that the Transit Center is right near McLoughlin, creating a more hazardous pedestrian environment.

### **C-3, Southgate Transit Center**

Creates a Transit Center at the Southgate site with 12 bus ports and a Park and Ride structure.

- Moves bus traffic out of the Downtown area, which presents both pros and cons.
- This scenario would provide the same level of local service to the Downtown, but would not create any activity in the Downtown.

Unsworth reviewed a matrix defining the options' costs, travel times, business displacements, loss of buildable area, level of Downtown bus service, added Park and Ride spaces, quality of pedestrian environment, and additional busses on Harrison east of the Jr. High. He highlighted the following:

- C-1 would cost 5 to 6 million to build.
- C-2 would cost 0.3 million less than C-1.
- C-3 would cost 15.3 million to build (construction of the 600 space Park and Ride facility)
- C-1 and C-2 provide pedestrian friendly environments and could help spur activity in the Downtown district.
- This scenario would provide the same level of local service to the Downtown, but would not create any activity in the Downtown.

Unsworth emphasized the idea that it wasn't so much a discussion about Busways as it was about where to place the stations.

Koonce had some reservations about how many connections the Southgate Transit Center would have to Downtown Milwaukie, he wondered if the level of service would be compromised.

- Unsworth said there would be five busses in an hour that linked Downtown to Southgate. However, Unsworth explained that if demand dictated a higher frequency, additional busses would be added.
- It was also pointed out that busses would still be running on McLoughlin, so the Downtown would still be serviced by those busses.

Kathy Buss wanted to know to what level the Busway options interface with the Light Rail options.

- Unsworth explained the Light Rail B options would provide the full range of local and regional bus service, while the Transit Center at Southgate might lose some local accessibility.

Don Arambula, of Crandall and Arambula Consultants, discussed how each set of alternatives, both bus and rail, would impact the Downtown and Riverfront Plan.

- He quickly reviewed the two primary objectives of the Plan.
  1. Invigorate the economic vitality of Downtown by providing anchors on the north and the south of the district to establish a thriving retail corridor.
  2. Reconnect the Downtown to the Willamette River.
- Arambula explained a study is currently underway examining a variety of methods for crossing McLoughlin so the Downtown is re-linked with its Riverfront, and that the City's zoning has been amended and design standards have been adopted to create the type of future the Plan outlines.

- Arambula said his firm had just recently received the drawings of the alternatives, and therefore has not had the opportunity to thoroughly examine each, so he would offer points that should be considered rather than a highly detailed analysis.
  - He suggested the plans that place a transit facility near Main and McLoughlin might disrupt the area the Plan utilizes for its north anchor.
    - Furthermore, a facility here might add another barrier between the Downtown and the Riverfront.
  - He emphasized that the Plan does not include the Jr. High site, and therefore that site did not undergo the zoning changes the rest of Downtown underwent when Council adopted the Plan.
  - The B options, the Light Rail options using the Tillamook Branch, have less impact on the Plan because it runs to the east of Downtown.
  - Arambula noted that the B-2 option was attractive because it offered multiple entry points to the Downtown area and called for a mixed-use Park and Ride facility at Washington and McLoughlin, which could be helpful to the Plan.

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Martha Bennett, Milwaukie Community Development Director, examined each of the alternatives and talked about how each worked with the Neighborhood's "14 Points."

- Her overall conclusion was that there was not one option that met all 14 points, but that some addressed some points better than others.
- She began with the Busway options, and stated that the Busway options have the advantage of being more flexible and easier to expand, but don't seem to allure commuters as well as Light Rail does. Also that the Busway options don't do much to advance the objective of preserving the junior high site, through station development.

Bennett made the following observations:

- C-2, McLoughlin Transit Center, is pretty good, offers good connectivity, and better transit service to the Downtown.
- C-3, Southgate Transit Center, does a good job of taking the negative effects of busses being Downtown by moving the Transit Center north to the Southgate site.

Bennett made the following observations concerning the Light Rail options:

- The A options, where the track follows Main Street, are not as good as the B options, where the line follows the Tillamook Branch.
- A-2, Safeway Terminus, requires a lot of displacements, and has limited possibilities for extension. Extensions would inevitably create a barrier between the downtown and the riverfront.
- A-3, McLoughlin Terminus, is the best option of the A's because there are limited displacements, would make the Safeway site attractive for development, and would help spur Downtown development. This "A" option best meets the 14 points.
- A-4, Southgate Transit Center, doesn't offer very good Light Rail service to the Downtown core, but isn't bad for residential development.
- B-1, Jr. High Transit Center Terminus, meets the objectives of preserving the Jr. High site and keeping costs low, but the terminus there doesn't provide a Park and Ride which might create a parking problem that seeps into surrounding Neighborhoods if a transit station is placed there.
  - Doesn't offer the best connection to Downtown, and doesn't best serve the Downtown employment centers.
- B-2 Lake Road Terminus, is the best of the B's because it creates a lot of Downtown activity, provides a good site for a Park and Ride facility at McLoughlin and Washington because of the existing grade and has good access to McLoughlin, and is at the edge of Downtown.
- B-3, Park Ave. Terminus, is a lot more expensive and involves neighborhoods outside Milwaukie that have not been involved in the process.
- AB-1, Southgate Crossover, develops the potential of the Northern Industrial area, offers good development opportunities, and preserves the Jr. High.
  - But there's a problem with the alignment's single-track approach in certain areas because of expansion constraints, and there's no transit center at the southern terminus which might overrun the Jr. High property.
  - It does offer an innovative approach and could be made better through discussion.

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Lawson discussed the method in which the alternatives were to be narrowed. She used a system in which everyone at the table was able to indicate which options they would like to scrap, discuss further, and advance for further analysis.

- Koonce was concerned that there were certain elements in each plan he felt were damaging, but that because they were components of each plan, he might not have the opportunity to voice his opinion.
  - He was chiefly concerned that the Park and Ride at Tacoma of 1,000 spaces would disproportionately affect the Ardenwald/Johnson Creek Neighborhood Association. He reasoned that commuters would be driving through his Neighborhood in order to get to that Park and Ride facility.
  - Councilor Brian Newman suggested that the level of detail could be discussed down the road, and that it might not be the best strategy to discount an entire alternative on the basis of one element.
- Zumwalt suggested discounting all the Light Rail options featuring a single track because they offer limited expansion opportunities.
  - Bennett suggested that if there was one element that is detrimental to the rest of the option, the single issue could be addressed, thereby preserving the rest of the option, which might have more agreeable elements.
- Councilor King asked what the end goal was of the meeting; how many Light Rail and how many Busway options should be advanced.
  - Lawson said that all of the options the community would not support should be eliminated.
- Ball wondered if the group would be attempting to recreate the options by going through and picking and choosing the components they liked and didn't like of each.
- Bennett thought it might be helpful to go through each alternative and determine which transit center locations and which park and ride facility locations they preferred most.

Lawson took a preliminary vote, to see if any options gained majority support or could be immediately discarded.

A-1: Majority not supportive	B-1: Maybe forward	C-1: Majority not supportive
A-2: Majority not supportive	B-2: Yes, but needs further discussion	C-2: Mixed support
A-3: Mixed support	B-3: Majority not supportive	C-3: Mixed support
A-4: Fairly High # of 5s	AB-1: Mixed support	

Questions the group thought should be addressed early on included:

- The feasibility of double tracking on Main Street.
- Are we considering future capacities with each option we are carrying forward.
- Councilor Newman said he prefers the options that feature a station in the Northern Industrial area because it could boost redevelopment in that area.
- Aschenbrenner said he has problems with A's and AB1 because of the location of the Transit Center and wanted to incorporate the Southgate Park and Ride facility of C-3 into the B-2 Light Rail Option – the option that features the Jr. High Transit center, the Lake Road terminus, and the Park and Ride Structure at McLoughlin and Washington.
  - Aschenbrenner wanted to explore the idea of moving the Park and Ride at Southgate more towards the Hannah Site in order to improve access to Highway 224.
    - Bennett explained that freight tracks running through and around the Hannah site might inhibit that scenario. Even if the property is acquired, the ownership of the freight rail's right of way may pose serious challenges.
  - Macken-Hambright raised the possibility of acquiring property to the east and west of the Hannah site and routing Amtrak through the Transit Center and making it a regional transportation center.
  - The group agreed that more information was needed about why buses from downtown cannot enter from McLoughlin Blvd. The group requested that the technical team rework B-2 with an industrial site transit center, and it was suggested that a Milwaukie team could help sort through this.
- Ball said he liked the B-2 Lake Road Terminus option because it provided the Downtown with two transit stations, which could be helpful in its redevelopment.
- Zumwalt felt a Park and Ride at that location could create a lot of traffic problems on Lake Road – a City street that already has its traffic troubles.
- Koonce favored a hybrid of AB-1 that extends south to a terminus at Lake Road and 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue, the station of B-2.
- Teresa suggested considering the Lake Rd Terminus option with the terminus located to the west of Tillamook Branch.
- Ball said that if that option featured a double track throughout, he would support it.

**The option on the table became AB-1 with a station at Lake Road and double tracked throughout. After some discussion, this option was forwarded for further study.**

- Macken-Hambright suggested that the transit center site of A-3 is in an area that has flooded in the past.
- Ball said he didn't like the A-3 option because nine businesses would be displaced.

- Councilor King and Bennett explained that the businesses would be relocated and given a fair price, as mandated by Federal regulations, though it does not guarantee that those businesses would relocate in Milwaukie.
- Aschenbrenner questioned Bennett's earlier assertion that A-4, Southgate TC, wouldn't accommodate development at the Safeway site very well.
  - Bennett said the busses wouldn't serve it all that well, because there wouldn't be any stations near the Safeway site.
  - Arambula added that A-3 would greatly impact the north anchor objective as described in the Downtown and Riverfront Plan.
- The question arose as to whether or not an "A" option should be sent forward.
  - Councilor Newman suggested that in order to best represent everyone in the entire community, it might be best to pick options that represent the wide variety of options that exist, rather than picking options that create a more narrow view.
- Zumwalt asked if there was a way A-3 McLoughlin Terminus could be modified to avoid impacting the Downtown Plan's northern anchor.
- Bennett suggested the decision between A-3 and A-4 should be based on the quality of bus service that each would provide. In her opinion, A-3 has better bus service for Downtown.

**A-3 goes forward with the provision of creating an option that will not be as harmful to the northern anchor.**

**A-4 was discarded by the group.**

- Councilor King pointed out that if you study B-2, the light rail option extending to the Lake Road station from the Jr. High site, B-1 will be included because B-2 goes through the Jr. High on its way to the Lake Road terminus.
  - Koonce said he was not supportive of B-1 because it puts the parking burden all at one location – the Park and Ride facility at Tacoma, which would impact his Neighborhood.
    - Councilor Newman pointed out that the Tacoma Street Park and Ride is out of Milwaukie's jurisdiction.
  - Councilor Lancaster said it would also make sense to study B-2, because it would help financially with phasing in the second segment, the segment from the Jr. High to the Lake Road terminus, if funding was tight.
  - Aschenbrenner suggested B-1, the Jr. High Terminus light rail alternative include a Park and Ride at the Hanna Site.
  - Koonce said he would endorse that option because it would ease the burden on the Ardenwald/Johnson Creek Neighborhood.

**B-1 and B-2 and AB-1 go forward with the additional station in the Northern Industrial area.**

- The focus for further analysis being costs, the disbursement of parking impacts, and service providing good access to Downtown.
- Aschenbrenner suggested C-2, the McLoughlin Busway Transit Center alternative, with a parking structure in the Northern Industrial area.

**After some discussion, it was decided C-2 and C-3 go forward.**

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Public Comment:

Jean Covey of the Lewelling Neighborhood understood Koonce's concerns about providing just one Park and Ride facility at Tacoma Street. Covey said his Neighborhood would be impacted by pass-through traffic as well, and that it would be best if another Park and Ride were created to lessen the burden on the northern end of the City.

- Councilor King suggested there were other Park and Ride facilities just outside of the City that might help ease the burden.

Sally Jacob questioned if it were safer to be in a light rail car or a bus during an earthquake.

She also questioned what the outcome would be if nobody used the system that is constructed, if the system could be converted into other uses.

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- A question arose about why there weren't any stations along the Light Rail line in the Northern Industrial area.

- The answer was that there wasn't any access to that area, that it is heavy industrial, and the rail faces the back of a bunch of warehouses.
- Koonce said a station in the Northern Industrial area might really create some redevelopment opportunities.
- Councilor Newman thanked Metro and Tri-Met for being so diligent in presenting a variety of options that addressed the City's concerns.
- Macken-Hambright was optimistic the process in place would produce a win-win plan that was beneficial to all of the partners involved.
- Clackamas County Commissioner Mike Jordan said he too thought the process was a good one, and was very pleased to see Milwaukie residents coming together to develop a regional transportation plan they would be supportive of.
  - Aschenbrenner asked Jordan if any of the proposals forwarded would mesh with the County's interests.
    - Jordan thought that most all of them would, but they all involve other communities in the County, and everyone's interests need to be considered
- Metro Commissioner David Bragdon thought narrowing the options was very positive, and that all of them can be tweaked to become even better. He said the next step would be to take the various proposals out to the community, create more consensus, and generate ideas on how to make them better.
- Councilor Newman said he would reiterate the Neighborhood's "14 Points" at the upcoming Metro JPACT Meeting, and will forward the options that were agreed upon that evening.